

PROFILE OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PHILIPSTOWN 2017

The First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown is also known as “The Church of the Open Door.” As our inclusivity statement, printed in the bulletin every Sunday, states:

“Knowing that all community is a gift of God, we affirm there can be no exclusiveness about the body of Christ. We welcome into our community and membership all people of God regardless of ethnic heritage, national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or socioeconomic standing; and we encourage the full participation of all in the life of our congregation”.

--Adopted by the Session March 9, 1990

We are a group of Christians striving to discern God's will for our ministry in the Hudson Valley and beyond. We're a close-knit congregation of 106 active members, diverse in age, background and interests. People are drawn largely from the villages of Cold Spring and Nelsonville and from the hamlet of Garrison to the south, all in the town of Philipstown. Once a working-class area, in recent years, Philipstown has become more prosperous. Demographic information is provided following the church profile, and while the statistics have not caught up to this, the face of Philipstown is also changing, as evidenced by more diversity among the faces of children at our local school district.

With the ease of a commute into Manhattan, many people who attend First Presbyterian work in NY City. Members also come from the city of Beacon to the north and from Putnam Valley to the east. There is strong lay person involvement and leadership in the life of the church, with the Board of Deacons and the Session having 8 members each at present.

Worship is a central part of our life as a congregation. We have one Sunday worship service, at 10:30 a.m. September to June, moving to 10:00 during July and August. We also have an outdoor service and picnic one summer Sunday at Constitution Island. There has been active lay leadership in our worship services, with lay people serving as readers, ushers, presenters of the youth sermon, and occasionally preaching when the pastor has been on leave and we've chosen not to hire a guest minister.

Music is very important in our worship, and our long-time Director of Music, Tom McCoy, programs a variety of musical styles in the choir anthems and hymns. We have a dedicated choir of 9 to 12 people who love working with Tom, as well as gifted amateur instrumentalists in the congregation who join him and the choir for special musical presentations. Since September, 1999, there have been Jazz Vespers services on Saturday evenings in fall, winter and spring. Tom, who is an excellent jazz and classical pianist, has been central to the success of these services and has recruited many fine jazz musicians to perform with him.

Children have a central place in the life of our congregation. Younger children attend the beginning of the worship service and have a youth sermon. During the offering, children collect quarters to purchase a goat through the Heifer International program. Thus far they have raised money to fund 8 goats.

Christian education is an important part of our congregational life. Sunday School for the children is during the church hour after the offering. They are currently in a one room multi-age class using the curriculum "Growing in Grace and Gratitude." The number of children varies greatly from week to week, from 4 to 12 children. While our middle and high school-age children like to be part of mission projects, they are not often in worship once they are confirmed, and this is a concern. There is an adult class at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings, which averages 10-12 people. This group does book studies, bible studies, and topical studies, led by the pastor, parish associates, and lay people.

Mission and outreach is the heart of FPCP, and it is one way that we create a 'web of service' joining our congregation with others in town. A major project started by the Deacons has been a community food pantry on Saturday mornings. This is the only food pantry in the western part of Putnam County, and is run by members and friends, with the help of other congregations and community groups in Cold Spring, including local Boy Scouts. There is a vegetable garden in front of the church that provides fresh vegetables for the Food Pantry clients. It is called the "Inspiration Garden" and is maintained by the church and local Girl Scouts. A local farm, Glynwood, donates discounted Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares to Food Pantry clients, and volunteers pick up the vegetables at the farm for the Saturday Food Pantry.

Our congregation is a member of Presbybuild/Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh, where we raise money and provide hands-on labor for Habitat projects in the City of Newburgh, several Saturdays during the year. We participate in Midnight Run, a program which takes food, clothing and conversation to people who live on the street in New York City, twice each year as a team with volunteers from St. Philips Episcopal Church in Garrison. We also have members who join with St. Philip's to volunteer as tutors to at-risk students attending San Miguel Academy in Newburgh. In addition, once a month we prepare and deliver lunch for a soup kitchen, sponsored by the Peekskill Area Pastors' Association.

A group of church women sponsor a *Harvest Sale* of baked goods and crafts in November. They have recently been joined in their effort by women from the Methodist Church in Cold Spring, and have assisted them in a crocheting and blanket-making group. The monies raised have been used to buy items such as furniture for the church library, an air conditioner for the sanctuary, and to assist the Capital Campaign.

During the school year, there is a **Community Nursery School** & Learning Center which uses the church's facilities from 9 am to 1 pm, five days a week. This was started as a mission project of the church and is independently operated at this point, with liaison from the Session. In addition, some non-profit groups, such as girl scouts and AA, regularly use the church's hall or library, for a moderate donation.

Our congregation has maintained a balanced budget without borrowing from our small endowment fund for almost 4 years, since our Pastor position was reduced from 50 hours per week to 30 hours. The 2017 budget is approximately \$170,000. We presently have 34 pledging units, for a total of approx. \$108,000 from our fall 2016 stewardship campaign.

We began a 3-year **Capital Campaign** drive in January of 2016, which raised over \$120,000 from members, friends and the local community, so that we were able to fully fund and complete phase 1, as follows: Exterior work completed - new roof, steeple scraped and painted, brickwork repointed and/or sealed, wood and trim painted, doors repainted and new locks installed, front steps repaired; Interior work completed - Sanctuary: plaster repaired and repainted, sound system repaired, electric switches updated. Social Hall and hallway: New flooring, crash bars installed on exit doors. We have a balance on hand in the capital campaign account of approximately \$45,000 to begin our Phase 2 work this summer, which focuses on our manse, which is next door to the church and currently occupied, and some interior/exterior work to the church facility.

We seek pastoral leadership for the interim to help to maintain and grow the existing programs, to continue to enlist and to expand the active involvement of members and friends in keeping all of the areas of our ministry vital, and to guide us to the call of our next long term pastor.

Another statement in our bulletin each Sunday states that

"The Church of the Open Door is where we seek to live out the truth of God's love; worship is inclusive and inventive; joy is found in nurturing one another; and we seek to bring comfort to all people."

We strive to make it be so.

Please visit our website: www.presbychurchcoldspring.org and look for us on Facebook

ABOUT COLD SPRING, NY [source: www.coldspring.gov]

The historic Village of Cold Spring is a small community in southeastern New York that is situated on the east bank of the Hudson River only fifty miles north of Manhattan. It is one of two incorporated Villages within the Town of Philipstown in Putnam County. The Village occupies 0.6 square miles across the river from the United States Military Academy at West Point in the most scenic region of the Hudson Highlands.

The village was established in 1846 and enjoyed a booming industrial economy throughout the 19th Century with the success of the West Point Foundry, which became famous for the manufacture of the Parrott Cannon of Civil War fame and other munitions. The community has since shifted from its industrial past to an economy dependent on tourism. Our Main Street is the focal point of a well-preserved National Historic District and is lined with novelty and antique stores, restaurants, residences, our Village Hall and a fire department. Residents and visitors alike are attracted to the breathtaking surroundings and small town character, where they can enjoy a range of cultural and recreational activities.

TOWN OF PHILIPSTOWN, NEW YORK

(Includes Villages of Cold Spring and Nelsonville and the Hamlet of Garrison)

[source: www.city-data.com/city/Philipstown-New-York.html]

Population in 2010: 9,662. Population change since 2000: +2.5%

Males: 4,727 (48.9%) Females: 4,935 (51.1%)

Median resident age: 45.4 years New York median age: 40.7 years

Estimated median household income in 2015: \$90,057 (it was \$71,895 in 2000)

Philipstown: \$90,057

NY: \$60,850

Estimated per capita income in 2015: \$49,423 (it was \$37,738 in 2000)

Estimated median house or condo value in 2015: \$376,075 (it was \$224,400 in 2000)

Philipstown: \$376,075

NY: \$293,500

Mean prices in 2015: All housing units: \$365,250; Detached houses: \$371,719; Townhouses or other attached units: \$358,193; In 2-unit structures: \$314,328; In 3-to-4-unit structures: \$307,553; In 5-or-more-unit structures: \$303,410; Mobile homes: \$92,442

Race in Philipstown, NY (2010)

8,522	88.2%	White alone	134	1.4%	Asian alone
671	6.9%	Hispanic	16	0.2%	American Indian alone
151	1.6%	Two or more races	15	0.2%	Other race alone
148	1.5%	Black alone	5	0.05%	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander